

PORTRAIT OF A COVER ARTIST

DHRUBA ESH

Dhruba Esh has designed a staggering number of the most iconic covers to grace bookshelves over the years. He is the creative mind behind the covers of most of Humayun Ahmed's acclaimed novels, including the Himu and Misir Ali series. He has been working in the publishing industry for three decades, starting his career as a cover artist in 1989 with a book of poems written by Mustak Ahmed. At the time, he was a second-year student at the Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka. Teaming up with both renowned and promising authors, Dhruba Esh has designed around a thousand book covers for this year's Ekushey Boi Mela. In an exclusive chat with The Daily Star, he gets candid about his passion for art, books and more.

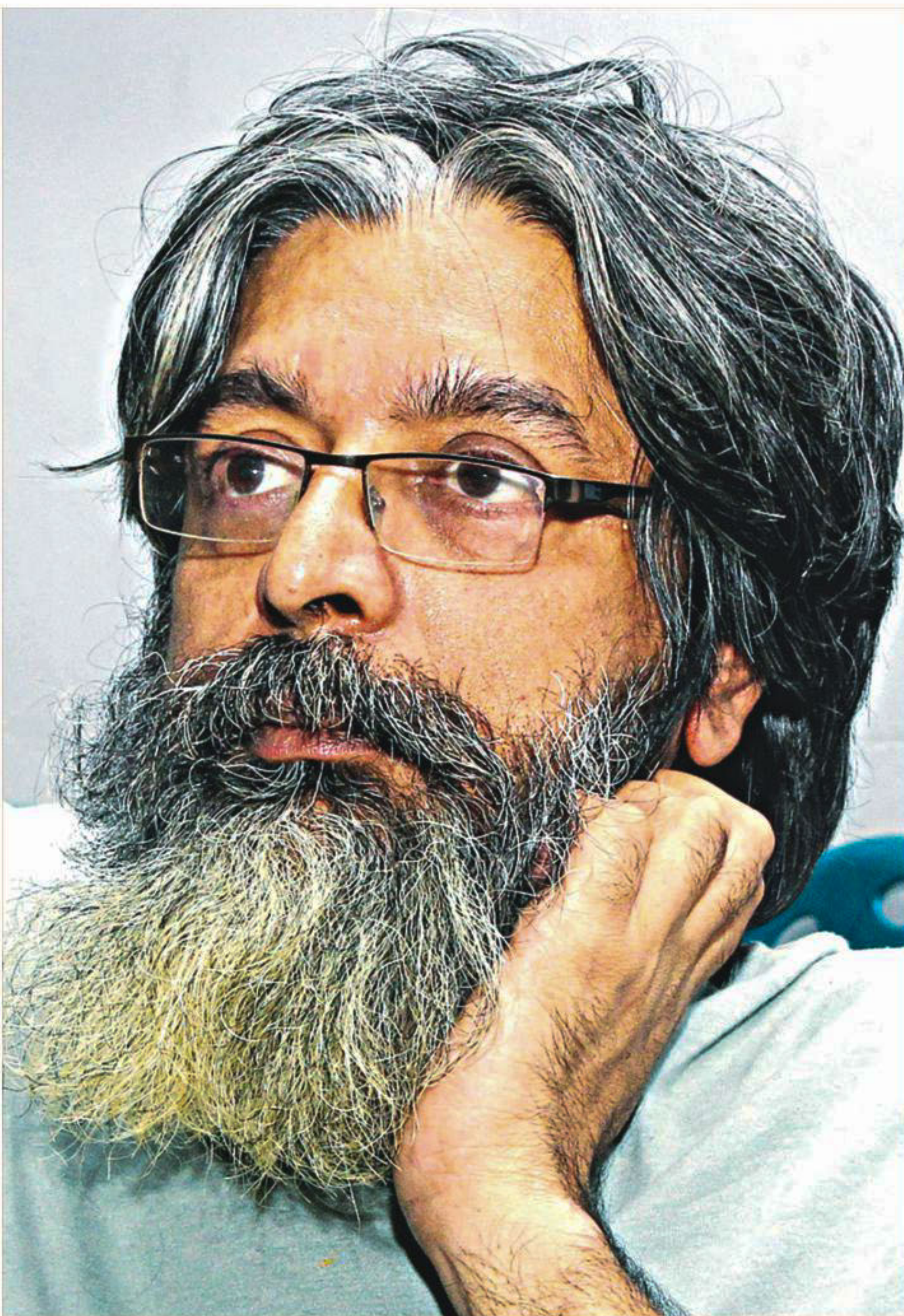


PHOTO: COURTESY

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

How do you usually come up with ideas for the design of a book cover?
More often than not, I start designing the cover as soon as I come to know what the book is about. When it comes to the cover, I prioritise the story more than the status of the author. I have designed close to 25,000 book covers in my career so far, both for established and new authors.
What would you say is the most rewarding part of this profession?
In my opinion, there is an immense sense of joy and passion that comes with being a

cover artist. This profession hasn't bored me yet. I love being a part of the creation of books everyday that I breathe.
You have worked on all the covers of Human Ahmed's entire Himu series. Do you miss the character of Himu?
Himu is one of my most favourite characters of all time. Needless to say, I miss reading about him and making covers for the series. But more than that, I miss the author behind Himu, particularly throughout the month of the Boi Mela. I feel privileged to have worked with Humayun Ahmed.
Out of all the works that you have seen of other artists, which cover is your favourite?

I remember being unable to turn my eyes away from the cover of Sunil Gangopadhyay's *Eka Ebong Koekjon*, brilliantly designed by Purnendu Putri. I also really like the designs of many of Satyajit Ray's books.
Besides being a book cover artist, you are also a writer.
How many of your books are releasing at this year's Boi Mela?
I have numerous books that will be unveiled at the Boi Mela this year. One of the books is a thriller titled, *Ku Jhik Jhik*. My books, *Raasta Haate Ami Haati Na* and *Holud Robot Shobuj Robot* will also be released among others.



PHOTO: COURTESY

'The Challenger' to air on ATN Bangla

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

ATN Bangla is launching a new programme titled, *The Challenger*, directed by Queen Rahmaan, from February 3. The show will feature various successful women in their respected fields, including

the likes of Rokia Afzal Rahman, chairman of MIDAS Financing Limited, and Rubaba Dowla, Founder and Managing Director of Pulse Healthcare Services, among others. The show is compiled by Shrabonee Halder and hosted by Ferdousi Ahmed.

Peter Jackson's upcoming film about The Beatles



Director Peter Jackson (*Lord of the Rings*) is set to include unreleased video of John, Paul, George and Ringo as they worked on their album *Let It Be* in January 1969, in his upcoming film about The Beatles, one of the greatest bands in history. The Oscar-winning director is rather optimistic about working with around 55 hours of video and 140 hours of audio in his new

project. Fascinated by the content, Jackson mentioned that it is almost as if he was travelling back in time to watch The Beatles as they created classics from scratch in the studio. The band's final gig was held on January 30, 1969, at Apple's rooftop offices in London. They officially split a year later.

SOURCE: REUTERS

Dhaka International Poets Summit under spotlight

ZAHANGIR ALOM

Dhaka International Poets Summit 2019 began on Wednesday morning with the participating poets paying tribute to our martyrs at the National Martyrs' Memorial in Savar, Dhaka. Noted Bangladeshi poet Aminur Rahman, also the president of Kathak Bangladesh, led the participating foreign poets to the National Martyrs' Memorial on the day.

Later, the poets visited Jahangirnagar University to observe migratory birds, and interact with the students and teachers of the university's Department of English. Professor Ahmed Reza of the department welcomed them.

The summit's formal opening took place in the evening with poems and paintings in an exhibition at the National Art Gallery of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA). Widely acclaimed Bangladeshi painter Maksudul Ahsan's paintings are now on display at the gallery. It also showcases poems of



PHOTO: COURTESY

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7 foreign and 8 Bangladeshi poets. The exhibition will continue till February 7.

CEO and Managing Director of IFIC Bank, M Shah Alam Sarwar graced the occasion as the chief guest. Akhtaruz Zaman Khan Kabir,

Chairman, Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation, presided over the function. Participating poets, along with renowned artists and eminent literary and cultural personalities attended the programme.

Information Minister Dr Hasan Mahmud attended the summit as the chief guest at the National Art Gallery auditorium of BSA. Professor Shamsuzzaman Khan, former DG of Bangla Academy, presided over the

programme. Kathak, a poetry initiative of Bangladesh, in association with Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation, Bangla Academy, Gallery Chittrak and Bandhan Art & Culture Society organised the summit. This is the sixth annual Dhaka International Poets Summit that Kathak Bangladesh has organised.

Kathak Bangladesh honoured seven foreign poets: Ali Al-Shalah (Iraq), Annabel Villar (Uruguay), Claire Booker (UK), Julio Pavanetti (Uruguay), Kama Sywor Kamanda (Congo), Malim Ghazali Pk (Malaysia) and Tianxin Cai (China), with the Kathak Literary Award 2019. Apart from poetry recitations by the fifteen participating renowned Bangladeshi and overseas poets, the summit also featured the launch of four poetry books and instrumental music performance.

The summit concludes tomorrow at Bishwo Shahitto Kendro through a daylong poetry session. Bangladeshi poet Sakib Lohani will also have a launching ceremony for his book, *Potroput*, published by Anyadhara, on the day.